

Hon. Claire C. Cecchi

United States District Judge

Martin Luther King Jr. Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse

50 Walnut Street

Newark, NJ 07101

Re: *United States v. Jobadiah Weeks*, No. 19-cr-877-CCC

Request to Allow McKenzie Assistance at May 8 Hearing

Dear Judge Cecchi,

I respectfully write to request that the Court permit my wife, **Dasha Weeks Gordon**, to assist me as a **McKenzie friend** at the upcoming hearing scheduled for **May 8, 2025**.

As the Court is aware, I am currently representing myself **pro se** in this matter. Dasha has been closely involved with the case for several years and has provided substantial personal and logistical support throughout. Given the complexity of the legal issues and the volume of documents—compounded by my restricted access to legal research tools under current bail conditions—her assistance is essential for ensuring I can effectively present my defense.

Dasha will not address the Court, examine witnesses, or participate in legal argument. Her role will be limited to **quiet assistance at counsel table**, helping me organize materials, take notes, and manage the procedural flow of the hearing. This type of non-lawyer support has been recognized as permissible under established law.

Legal Authority Supporting McKenzie Friend Assistance

Courts have acknowledged the right of **pro se litigants to receive non-lawyer assistance**, particularly where it supports the administration of justice and does not interfere with courtroom decorum. See:

- ***McKaskle v. Wiggins*, 465 U.S. 168 (1984)** – recognizing that assistance for pro se defendants does not violate any constitutional norms so long as the defendant remains in control of the defense;
- ***United States v. Mills*, 704 F.2d 1553, 1562 (11th Cir. 1983)** – affirming the trial court's discretion to allow a friend or family member to assist at counsel table in a non-advocacy role;
- ***Faretta v. California*, 422 U.S. 806 (1975)** – protecting the right of self-representation and acknowledging that courts may permit “advisory” assistance to pro se defendants.

Based on this authority, I respectfully request that the Court allow Dasha's presence at counsel table during the May 8 hearing, and that this permission extend to future hearings if necessary.

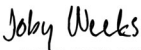
Dasha is fully prepared to abide by all courtroom rules and limitations, and her assistance will be entirely subordinate to my self-representation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Jobadiah Weeks

Defendant Pro Se

Signed by:

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Electronically Signed via DocuSign

Date: May 1, 2025

Address

11627 West 74th Way

Arvada, CO 80005

silenceweeks1@gmail.com